



Shattered Lens: Part 4 – Lighting Candles, Inflaming Bias

BY **SIMON PLOSKER** - FEBRUARY 24, 2011

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In **Part 3** of our Shattered Lens study, we highlighted how wire service photographers use clever photographic techniques to present a false impression that enhances images of Palestinian “suffering”. In that particular case, we focused on the use of bars. In this chapter we see how candles are employed as a similar prop.

In 2008, HonestReporting **highlighted** how Hamas used stage-managed candlelit protests during power blackouts in Gaza for cynical propaganda purposes.

Fast forward to 2010 and candles are still the image of choice for Hamas to paint a picture of Gaza under siege and suffering from electrical shortages, which can be blamed solely on Israel.

During the period of our study, Palestinians holding candles appeared regularly. One case in particular, however, deserves special attention. It was uncovered initially by blogger Elder of Zion and highlights a **stunning discrepancy** in captions between Reuters and Getty Images of the same event.

On June 25, a power plant in Gaza was shut down despite Israel's willingness to send the necessary fuel. Instead Hamas and Fatah argued over who should pay. Gazans then protested the shutdown.

Getty filed the following photo and caption of the protest:



Palestinian girls hold candles during a march in protest against the lack of fuel to Gaza's power station, and the continued power outages in the city, on June 25, 2010 in Gaza City.

Reuters covered the same protest and issued photos of the same girl as above, but the caption expressed a radically different motive for the protest.



Palestinian children hold candles during a protest in Gaza City	
25/06/2010	
System ID:	RTR2FQE6
Image ID:	GM1E66Q08QX01
Photographer:	REUTERS/Mohammed Salem
Palestinian children hold candles during a protest in Gaza City calling for an end to Israel's blockade on the Gaza Strip June 25, 2010.	
REUTERS/Mohammed Salem (GAZA - Tags: POLITICS CIVIL UNREST)	

Notice the caption: Palestinian children hold candles during a protest in Gaza City **calling for an end to Israel's blockade on the Gaza Strip** June 25, 2010. (Emphasis added)

It is also worth noting that the Reuters photo that claims the protest was against Israel's blockade was credited to Mohammed Salem, who happens to be the same photographer who took the infamous Hamas propaganda photos in 2008 mentioned above.

The continuous use of candles in photos creates the false impression of the Gaza Strip in perpetual darkness as a result of Israel's blockade. Below are some more examples of this phenomenon:



A Palestinian girl holds a candle during a protest in Gaza
02/06/2010
System ID: RTR2EOEX
Image ID: GM1E66307CM01
Photographer: REUTERS/Mohammed Salem
A Palestinian girl holds a candle during a protest at Gaza Seaport against the storming of a Gaza-bound ship, June 2, 2010. In a televised address after world outrage erupted over nine deaths in Monday's seizure of a Turkish ship bound for Gaza, a defiant Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said easing controls would put long-range Iranian missiles into the hands of the Palestinian enclave's Hamas rulers.
REUTERS/Mohammed Salem (GAZA - Tags: POLITICS CIVIL UNREST)



Palestinians hold candles during a protest in Gaza	
02/06/2010	
System ID:	RTR2EOHT
Image ID:	GM1E6630A2E01
Photographer:	REUTERS/Mohammed Salem
Palestinians hold candles during a protest at Gaza Seaport against the storming of a Gaza-bound ship, June 2, 2010. In a televised address after world outrage erupted over nine deaths in Monday's seizure of a Turkish ship bound for Gaza, a defiant Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said easing controls would put long-range Iranian missiles into the hands of the Palestinian enclave's Hamas rulers.	
REUTERS/Mohammed Salem (GAZA - Tags: POLITICS CIVIL UNREST)	



Title: Palestinian hold candles and shout sloga
Caption: Palestinian hold candles and shout slogans during a protest in Gaza City on June 2, 2010 against Israel's deadly raid on a Gaza-bound aid flotilla. AFP PHOTO/MOHAMMED ABED (Photo credit should read MOHAMMED ABED/AFP/Getty Images)
Date created: 02 Jun 2010



Title: Palestinian hold candles and shout sloga
Caption: Palestinian hold candles and shout slogans during a protest in Gaza City on June 2, 2010 against Israel's deadly raid on a Gaza-bound aid flotilla. AFP PHOTO/MOHAMMED ABED (Photo credit should read MOHAMMED ABED/AFP/Getty Images)
Date created: 02 Jun 2010



Palestinian women light candles during a demonstration against the arrest of Palestinian Hamas lawmaker Muhammad Abu-Teir, in Jerusalem
 01/07/2010
 System ID: RTR2FZQH
 Image ID: GM1E6720AGV01
 Photographer: REUTERS/Ammar Awad
 Palestinian women light candles during a demonstration against the arrest of Palestinian Hamas lawmaker Muhammad Abu-Teir, in Jerusalem July 1, 2010. Israeli police arrested Abu-Teir in his Jerusalem neighbourhood on Wednesday, saying he was there illegally after Israel revoked his residency permit over his hardline Islamist affiliation. REUTERS/Ammar Awad (JERUSALEM - Tags: CIVIL UNREST POLITICS)



Title: A Palestinian woman holds a candle durin
 Caption: A Palestinian woman holds a candle during a rally to support two Lebanese ships planning to sail from Lebanon to the Gaza Strip on a trip that aims to break Israel's blockade and to deliver aid, on June 21, 2010, in Gaza City's port. AFP PHOTO/MOHAMMED ABED (Photo credit should read MOHAMMED ABED/AFP/Getty Images)



Title: Palestinian women hold candles during a

Caption: Palestinian women hold candles during a rally to support two Lebanese ships planning to sail from Lebanon to the Gaza Strip on a trip that aims to break Israel's blockade and to deliver aid, on June 21, 2010, in Gaza City's port. AFP PHOTO/MOHAMMED ABED (Photo credit should read MOHAMMED ABED/AFP/Getty Images)



Title: A Palestinian girl holds a candle as she

Caption: A Palestinian girl holds a candle as she waves the Lebanese flag during a rally to support of two Lebanese ships planning to sail from Lebanon to the Gaza Strip on a trip that aims to break Israel's blockade and to deliver aid, on June 21, 2010, in Gaza City's port. AFP PHOTO/MOHAMMED ABED (Photo credit should read MOHAMMED ABED/AFP/Getty Images)



Palestinians hold candles during a protest against **Israel's** blockade of Gaza and in support of the Gaza-bound ships from Lebanon at the Gaza City port, Monday, June 21, 2010. **Israel** pledged Sunday it will immediately allow all goods into Gaza except weapons and items deemed to have a military use under its decision to ease its three-year-old blockade of the Palestinian territory. **Israel's** decision came amid international outcry that followed a deadly Israeli naval raid on a Gaza-bound flotilla of ships, attempting to break the blockade. (AP Photo/Khalil Hamra)



Palestinian children hold candles during a demonstration for the memorial of Palestinian prisoners who have died in Israeli jails, in front of the UNDP building in Gaza City, Saturday, June 26, 2010. (AP Photo/Adel Hana)



Palestinian lights a candle at his shop during a power cut in Gaza
 07/08/2010
 System ID: RTR2H4N5
 Image ID: GM1E6880BAJ01
 Photographer: REUTERS/Suhaib Salem
 A Palestinian lights a candle at his shop during a power cut in Gaza City August 7, 2010. Gaza's only major power station that provides a third of the territory's electricity stopped its generators on Saturday due to a dispute with the Palestinian government in the West Bank over fuel payments, officials said. REUTERS/Suhaib Salem (GAZA - Tags: POLITICS ENERGY)

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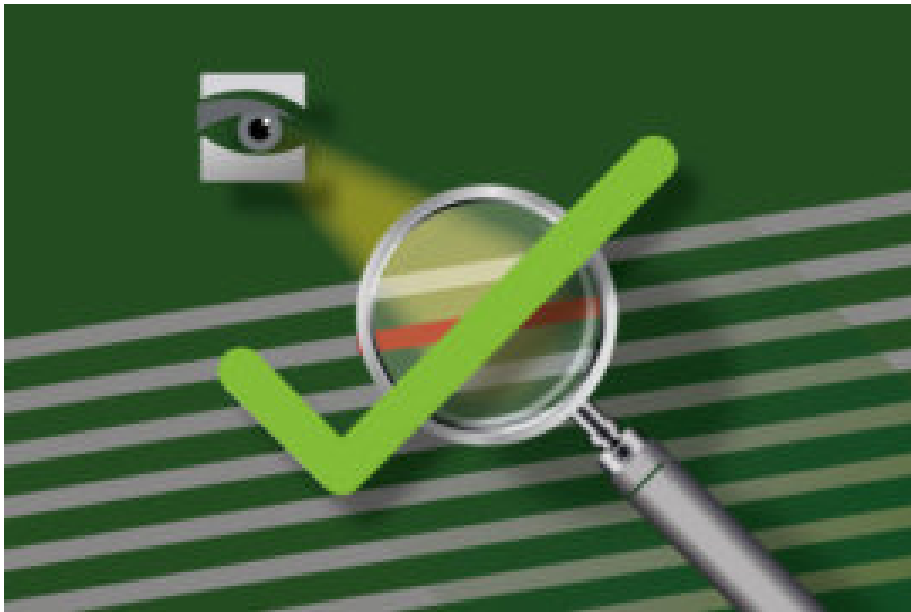


Simon Plosker

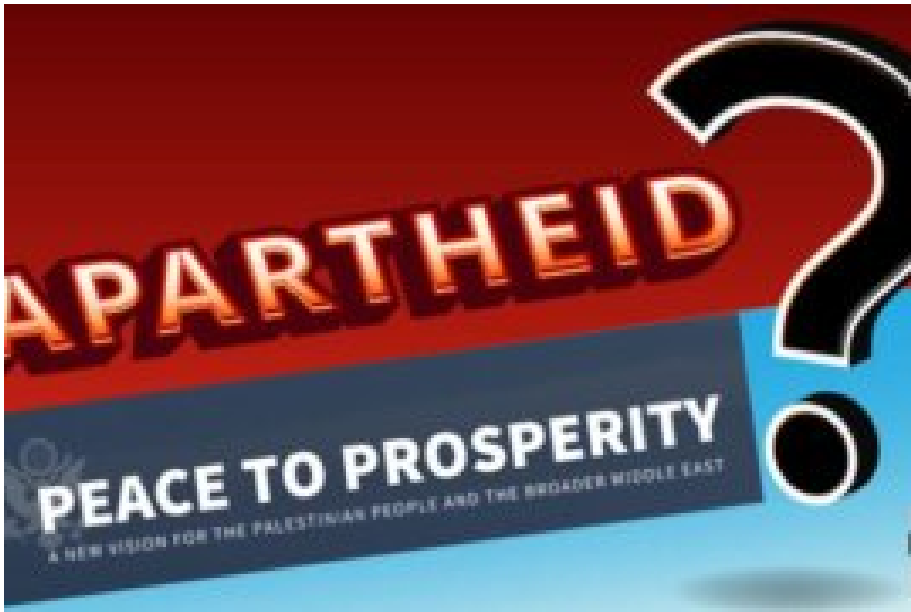
With overall responsibility for HonestReporting's content and output, Simon joined the HonestReporting team in November 2005 following several years working in a variety of non-profit organizations, including the Jewish Agency and the Board of Deputies of British Jews prior to immigrating to Israel in 2001 from London. In Israel, Simon has worked for BICOM and as Managing Editor of NGO Monitor as well as serving for a short period in the IDF Spokesperson's Unit. Simon has a BSoc.Sc in International Studies and Political Science from the University of Birmingham and a MSc in History of International Relations from the London School of Economics.

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